

**Citizens Focus Committee
Lake Ouachita**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

DATE: 14 April 2003

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee (CFC) Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: 1900 hours, Ouachita Project Management Office, by David Doty, Vice-Chairperson.

Attendees:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Rick Dwyer, Supervisory Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Pamela Rowland, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Al Behm
David Doty
Rick Farmer
Jerry Williams
Al Gathright
Howard Wright
Steve Laney
Patty Roddenberry
Michael Misch
Jerry Shields

Members Absent:

Dan Mobley
Bill Barnes
Delia McBride
Arnold Habig
Sue Richardson

Administrative Matters:

David Doty called the meeting to order at 1900.

Minutes Review:

The March 10, 2003 minutes were reviewed and approved as submitted.

Marine Sanitation

No report, although HB2525 was passed by the Senate and submitted to the Governor for signature. Rick Dwyer stated that members of the group would be informed to be present when Colonel Clapp arrives on April 24 for a photo opportunity to publicize the passage of HB2525 and to recognize the CFC efforts. Rick Dwyer told the group that their efforts on this bill were greatly appreciated and they have definitely spearheaded something that will be of great benefit to Arkansans and to the Corps.

Aquatic Vegetation:

David Doty inquired about the status of the hydrilla pond at DeGray Lake. Rick Dwyer stated that the pond was constructed and that hydrilla is being grown in the pond at this time, and it was doing very well. Upon getting with Mr. Grodowitz of ERDC, we would get flies hopefully later this year to introduce and raise in the pond.

David Doty mentioned he had been in contact with Texas A&M University regarding white amur. He had been informed there are two types of grass carp: a 12 year and a 20 year species. He also had discovered that Lake Conroe in Texas had been cleaned out by carp in 1983, but aquatic vegetation was coming back in that lake, and fishermen were expressing an interest in re-introducing the carp. Al Behm mentioned he had just returned from the Atchafalaya Basin in Louisiana and it had been cleared up since the last time he had been there. Al Behm stated we should contact the Louisiana Fisheries and Wildlife Department to see how they cleaned the basin.

Rick Dwyer stated that following the satellite imagery and pictures the Corps was trying to get funding to accomplish, the results would then be confirmed on the ground so we know what we are looking at. Each color, in this format, is to represent a different species, and that would be ground-verified.

Public Relations:

Al Gathright stated that much of the information that gets around about the Corps is rumors, i.e. in coffee shops, cafes, etc. The Corps should put out more effort in the public relations department. Patty Roddenberry stated she could get what we wanted in the Hot Springs Sentinel Record. Michael Misch suggested having an "imbedded" reporter with the Corps, much like reporters in Iraq at this time, someone who can get out information. Rick Farmer said any information would help get the word out. Al Gathright said the Corps should take a more aggressive approach to public relations.

Rick Dwyer stated that a Public Notice is placed in the newspaper about all of the CFC meetings. We also have the website now that can be utilized to get out information on what the Corps and the CFC is doing.

NEW BUSINESS

Jerry Shields suggested the name of the committee be changed to avoid being confused with another group with a similar name in Montgomery County that has been somewhat anti-government in the past. David Doty suggested the group drop Focus from the name. David Doty suggested a vote on this matter at the next month's meeting, to possibly change the name to the Lake Ouachita Citizen Committee.

Jerry Shields stated that the Highway Commission will be redoing the Denby Point bridge area, and perhaps when that area is repaved or possibly expanded, it may be a good time to get the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, and the Chamber of Commerce involved to make progress on the proposed Visitor Center in that area. A suggestion was made that the Corps could maybe donate the land to give the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission the old blowout bridge area. Jerry Shields also stated maybe the Audubon Society, the US Forest Service, Entergy, and even possibly Weyerhaeuser might be interested in the Visitor Center cooperative efforts. The center may be more feasible with a bridge expansion.

By-laws:

David Doty discussed the proposed amendments to the by-laws. Jerry Shields suggested the changes were not necessary, and that the Chairman should just remove committee members that are not participating. There was some discussion between Al Behm, Jerry Shields and David Doty on this matter. David Doty believed that the group should vote to remove members if need be, and not place so much pressure on a chairman to remove dead weight; after all, the chairman is still a volunteer position. Jerry Shields believed that turnover had been sufficient at this time, as 1/3 of the group had been changed since inception. Michael Misch suggested the by-laws matter be discussed and a motion was made by Patty Roddenberry and seconded by Jerry Williams to vote on the revised by-laws at the next meeting so the group does not rush into this matter.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 2032 hours. David Doty provided a sheet cake, in honor of Bill Barnes and Arnold Habig who had worked so diligently and successfully for HB2525, which will enhance the waters of Arkansas for years to come.